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Letter dated 18 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation in December 2011 (see annex). This report was prepared under my responsibility, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly Churkin

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Annex to the letter dated 18 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation (December 2011)

Introduction

Under the presidency of the Russian Federation, the Security Council carried out an extensive programme of work during the month of December. The Council held 50 meetings and closed consultations. The Council adopted 11 resolutions and agreed on one presidential statement and nine statements to the press.

Africa

Libya

On 2 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2022 (2011) extending the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) until 16 March 2012. The UNSMIL mandate was expanded by including the tasks of providing support to Libyan national efforts to address the threats of proliferation of all arms and related materiel of all types, in particular man-portable surface-to-air missiles.

On 22 December, the Council heard a briefing on the situation in Libya by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL, Ian Martin. He stressed that the public mood in Libya was gradually changing, as it became increasingly focused on issues that had been central to the demands of the revolution. He cautioned that the Libyan Interim Government was working in a security environment that would remain uncertain until decisions on the future of the former rebels were made and implemented. He also highlighted priority areas in which UNSMIL provided assistance to Libya.

The Council also heard a report by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal, on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), on the work of the Committee since 27 September 2011.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council voiced their support for UNSMIL and noted the stabilization efforts of the Interim Government. Members expressed concern over the security situation and underlined that, unless it was addressed quickly and effectively, normalization might become stalled, undermining the efforts of the authorities to stabilize the State. There was an exchange of views on the issue of a possible United Nations investigation of the civilian casualties caused during the NATO-led operation "Unified Protector". While some members of the Council supported this idea, other members claimed that this matter was being addressed by the Commission of Inquiry established by the Human Rights Council.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 2 December, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Roger Meece, on the situation in the country following the elections of 28 November 2011. Noting that the elections had been successful despite several incidents in the Kinshasa and Western Kasai regions, he urged the parties to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric before and after the official announcement of the results, scheduled for 6 December.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council welcomed the successful conduct of the elections, expressed their concern in view of reports on the armed clashes in some regions of the country and urged all parties to refrain from violence.

In their statement to the press, the members of the Council welcomed the holding of the election and reminded all political leaders that they were responsible for ensuring a fair and peaceful process. They supported the critical role of MONUSCO in providing technical and logistical assistance for the elections.

On 15 December, the Special Representative updated the Council on the recent developments in the country in the context of the electoral process. He urged all candidates and their supporters to refrain from all acts of violence, provocation and incitement to violence before and after the publication of the provisional and final results of the polls.

Members of the Council pointed out that all candidates should make every effort towards maintaining a calm and peaceful environment, exercise restraint, await results that would be declared in accordance with national constitutional procedures and resolve their differences peacefully, through established legal and mediation mechanisms, including the National Mediation Committee.

Peace and security in Africa

On 5 December, the Council adopted, by 13 votes in favour, with 2 abstentions, resolution 2023 (2011) reinforcing the sanctions regime for Eritrea and expanding the mandate of the Monitoring Group re-established by resolution 2002 (2011).

By resolution 2023 (2011), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council condemned the violations by Eritrea of Security Council resolutions 1844 (2008), 1862 (2009) and 1907 (2009) by providing continued support to armed opposition groups, including Al-Shabaab, called upon the parties to peacefully resolve their disputes as well as upon all States, in particular States of the region, to ensure strict implementation of the arms embargo under resolution 1907 (2009). The Council, inter alia, condemned the use of the "Diaspora tax" by the Government of Eritrea and decided that States, in order to prevent funds derived from the mining sector of Eritrea contributing to violations of resolutions 1844 (2008), 1862 (2009), 1907 (2009) or the current resolution, should take appropriate measures to promote the exercise of vigilance in the conduct of business in this sector.

Before the action, the Council heard statements by video teleconference by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority for

Development, Meles Zenawi; the President of Djibouti, Ismael Omar Guelleh; the Transitional Federal President of Somalia, Sheikh Sherif Ahmed; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Moses Wetangula; and the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the African Union.

Burundi

On 7 December, the Council heard a briefing on the situation in Burundi by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), Karin Landgren, and the Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Paul Seger. A representative of the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation of Burundi addressed the Council. The Special Representative said that the road out of past violence was long and difficult and in 2012 Burundi was expected to initiate a formal process of truth and reconciliation as well as dialogue between the Government and the extra-parliamentary opposition.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council underlined the importance of further efforts aimed at advancing security sector reform and establishing democratic and effective national institutions. They expressed serious concern over continuing killings and extrajudicial executions of opposition activists in Burundi, noting that such actions undermined the reconciliation process.

On 20 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2027 (2011) extending the mandate of BNUB until 15 February 2013. Following the vote, the Permanent Representative of Burundi took the floor to express his Government's position with regard to some issues reflected in the resolution.

Sudan

On 8 December, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, who noted that the security situation in the area of Abyei remained fragile. Both sides had not yet withdrawn their forces from the area, contravening the agreement of 20 June 2011. The security of the border between the Sudan and South Sudan remained of concern, and the United Nations continued to believe that the establishment of the joint border monitoring mechanism, already agreed by both parties, was needed to build confidence.

The Permanent Representative of the Sudan and the Acting Permanent Representative of South Sudan addressed the Council.

Members of the Council urged the Sudan and South Sudan to fulfil their agreements on border control in Abyei and to create a secure border area with the assistance of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). They commended the efforts of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel to bridge the gap between the respective positions of the parties, and called upon the Sudan and South Sudan to further engage in a peaceful settlement of their disputes.

On 14 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2024 (2011), by which it broadened the mandate of UNISFA to assist the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the process of border normalization on the whole, including through supporting the development of effective bilateral management mechanisms and facilitating liaisons and building mutual trust between the parties. The Council urged the Sudan and South Sudan to implement fully their

commitments under the agreements of 29 June 2011, which concerned the creation of a safe demilitarized border zone, and 30 July 2011, dealing with establishment of a Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, and urged those Governments to cooperate fully with each other and provide full support to UNISFA, enabling it to implement its mandate.

On 15 December, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo, briefed the Council on the course of the Court's investigations regarding Darfur. He reiterated his call for the Sudan to transfer indicted suspects to the Court. The Permanent Representative of the Sudan made a statement.

At the closed consultations that followed, some members of the Council stressed the Sudan's failure to abide by the arrest warrants issued by the Court, while others opined that the peace process objectives were the top priority of the international community.

On 16 December, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Néstor Osorio, presented to the Council a 90-day report on the work of the Committee.

Members of the Council underlined the need for maintaining the regime at this critical juncture of the Darfur peace process and imposing targeted sanctions on those who violate the arms embargo, impede the peace process and stage attacks against the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

On 22 December, the Council extended by five months the mandate of UNISFA by unanimously adopting resolution 2032 (2011). The Council stressed that the mission's ability to do its work effectively would depend on the implementation by the Sudan and South Sudan of earlier agreements, including on the withdrawal of all remaining military and police personnel from the Abyei area immediately and without preconditions, as well as on the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and the Abyei Police Service.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 8 December, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Albert Gerard Koenders. He informed the Council of the situation in the country on the eve of the legislative election of 11 December 2011. He stressed that the situation in Côte d'Ivoire had witnessed a substantial improvement since the end of the post-electoral crisis eight months earlier, in particular in the economic domain. However, political cleavages, access to land and unbalanced development remained issues of extreme concern.

Members of the Council welcomed the efforts by UNOCI to assist local authorities in holding peaceful, transparent and democratic elections. They reiterated the importance of avoiding any vacuum of security in Côte d'Ivoire and preventing violations of human rights during the electoral campaign. In this context, members of the Council reaffirmed the need for lessons to be learned from the armed confrontation that followed the presidential elections of 2010 in the country.

Liberia

On 9 December, members of the Council heard a briefing by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) concerning Liberia and Permanent Representative of Lebanon, Nawaf Salam, and exchanged views on the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia. It was noted that the situation in the country after the elections remained calm but fragile. In this regard, members of the Council stressed the need for further strengthening Liberia's security institutions.

On 14 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2025 (2011) extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Liberia for a period of 12 months. The Council noted the lack of progress in the implementation of the financial measures under the sanctions regime and asked the Panel, inter alia, to cooperate actively with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme and assess the Government of Liberia's compliance with the certification scheme.

Somalia

On 13 December, the Council heard a briefing by the Secretary-General on his visit to Somalia and the situation in the country. He told the Council that Somalia was finally facing a moment of fresh opportunities which was to be seized. All city districts were now under the effective control of the Transitional Federal Government, with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The Secretary-General said that the security gains should be extended beyond Mogadishu and stressed that, despite some progress, important deadlines had been missed. He called upon the Somali leadership to intensify efforts to implement the road map and to stick to the transition deadline of August 2012.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council reiterated their support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, Augustine Mahiga, aimed at addressing Somalia's challenges, in collaboration with the African Union and other international and regional partners. They commended the work of AMISOM and the Somali security forces in their campaign against insurgents.

The members of the Council issued a statement to the press, in which they called for faster implementation of the road map of key tasks and priorities to be completed by the transitional federal institutions before the current transitional arrangement ends in August 2012, while recognizing the need for international support to facilitate the process. They underlined the seriousness of the political, security and humanitarian problems in Somalia and stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy to address terrorism, piracy and hostage-taking.

Central African Republic

On 14 December, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), Margaret Vogt, told the Council that dialogue between the Government and opposition groups was paying peace dividends, but warned that a lack of funds to implement programmes to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate former fighters could undermine efforts to restore security.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council expressed concern over the security situation in the country, which remained precarious, and called for quick action by the Government to prevent a resurgence of conflict, which could have serious repercussions throughout the region. In this regard, they stressed the need for expediting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process as well as the second phase of security sector reform. The members of the Council welcomed efforts by the Government to combat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), as well as the African Union's regional cooperation initiative for the elimination of LRA and the appointment of an African Union special envoy to coordinate the initiative.

On 21 December, the members of the Council, by adopting unanimously resolution 2031 (2011), extended the mandate of BINUCA until 31 January 2013, stressing the need to ensure effective coordination of the work of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the country.

Guinea-Bissau

On 21 December, the Council, by resolution 2030 (2011), extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau until 28 February 2013. The Council emphasized that reform of the defence and security sectors, the fight against impunity and the fight against illicit drug-trafficking remained priority sectors for peace consolidation in Guinea-Bissau, and urged the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau to respect civilian rule and oversight.

Asia

Iraq

On 6 December, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Martin Kobler, who stressed that the withdrawal of United States forces by the end of the year would be an important milestone that entailed many challenges, provided all Iraqis the opportunity to prove to themselves that they could build a peaceful and better future and gave the country's officials the chance to consolidate democratic and economic gains. He noted that while the Iraqi security forces had assumed full control of the country's security, they continued to face armed opposition and terrorist groups. It was crucial for Iraq's leaders on all sides to work collectively to overcome their differences. He also urged Iraq to implement its outstanding Chapter VII obligations and find a sustainable solution to the situation of Camp Ashraf. The Permanent Representative of Iraq addressed the Council.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council voiced their concern over the security and humanitarian situation in Iraq. They expressed appreciation for the work of UNAMI and condemned recent terrorist acts, which had resulted in the deaths of civilians. Members of the Council also emphasized the necessity of finding a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Camp Ashraf issue.

On December 16, within the monthly "horizon-scanning" briefing at closed consultations by the Department of Political Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, gave an update on ongoing consultations with the Government of Iraq ahead of the deadline of 31 December set by the

Government to close Camp Ashraf. Arrangements were being made to resolve the issue in a peaceful and durable manner by that date.

Members of the Council appealed for a concerted extension to permit adequate time and space for a solution to be found which would also help to lower tensions. Any solution must respect Iraqi sovereignty, on the one hand, and be in line with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee laws, on the other.

Middle East

On 12 December, the Council was briefed in closed consultations by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied Palestinian territories. She expressed grave concern over the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Members of the Council condemned human rights violations and abuses and acts of violence in the Syrian Arab Republic, stressing the need to launch an inclusive Syrian-led political process. Some members of the Council stressed the deplorable human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

On 15 December, the Council held urgent consultations convened at the request of one member who introduced a draft resolution on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On 20 December, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, stressed that the realization of a two-State solution had not advanced, with violent incidents erupting at a worrisome rate, and outlined the efforts undertaken by the Quartet to help the parties resume direct talks, stressing the importance of de-escalation and confidence-building between the parties. He noted recent arson attacks and acts of desecration against mosques, among other actions by Israeli extremists, and welcomed in this context the condemnation of those acts by the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his intention to prevent further such incidents. The Assistant Secretary-General also voiced concern over Israeli settlement activity, violence on the part of settlers and the overall security situation in Gaza, including the firing of projectiles from Gaza into Israel.

He also expressed concern regarding the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, where popular protests had continued to be met with violent repression, resulting in numerous deaths, injuries and detentions, and said that the signing in Cairo of a protocol to dispatch League of Arab States monitors to the Syrian Arab Republic was encouraging.

At the closed consultations that followed, members of the Council stressed the importance of resuming Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and condemned unilateral actions, in particular the construction of settlements in occupied territories, which undermined the Quartet's efforts towards a negotiable solution of the conflict.

On 20 December, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, briefed the Council on the operational activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). He noted that the ceasefire in the Israel-Syria sector was observed while the situation in the UNDOF operation area remained generally quiet. He reported findings of the assessment of the Force's operational capacity conducted in accordance with resolution 1994 (2011).

The members of the Council underlined the stabilizing role of UNDOF and called on the parties to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation.

On 21 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2028 (2011), renewing the UNDOF mandate until 30 June 2012.

Also on 21 December, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Yemen, Jamal Benomar, delivered a briefing in closed consultations on the outcome of his trip to Yemen from 8 to 17 December, during which he had met with the President and Vice-President of Yemen, and other political actors, as well as protestors in Sana'a and Taiz, southern movements in Aden and Huthi leaders in Saada. He underlined that progress had been achieved in fulfilling the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative. However, he stressed that the situation remained highly fragile, and the political agreement would be impossible to implement without the continuous commitment and cooperation of political and other leaders throughout the country and increased support to Yemen's recovery from the international community.

Members of the Council appreciated the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser, and expressed readiness to continue supporting United Nations efforts in Yemen, recognizing that many political, security and humanitarian challenges were still ahead.

On 22 December, the Council issued a statement to the press welcoming the progress that had been made on implementing the political transition, on the basis of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, as well as the implementation mechanism, which was resulting in a peaceful transition of power, and reiterated their call that the initiative must be implemented in a transparent and timely manner, and in a spirit of inclusion and reconciliation. The Council expressed its expectation that the parties would continue to honour the timetable set out in the agreement, including the presidential elections on 21 February, national dialogue, the constitutional review and the programme of reforms to tackle the profound security, humanitarian and economic challenges that Yemen faced.

Iraq and Kuwait

On 15 December, the Council was briefed in closed consultations by the High-level Coordinator for compliance by Iraq with its obligations regarding the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains, as well as the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives seized by Iraq, Gennady Tarasov, who stated that the positive momentum, started in 2011 with regard to this humanitarian dossier, had become more visible and pronounced.

Members of the Council welcomed the continuing cooperation by the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait, and their high-level commitments to full implementation of all Iraqi obligations under the relevant resolutions. Members of the Council also stressed the need for Iraq to build on the steps already taken to fully meet those commitments.

Following the consultations a statement to the press was issued, in which the members of the Council expressed their support for the extension of the financing of the activities of the High-level Coordinator for a further period of six months.

Afghanistan

On 19 December, the President of the Council made a statement (S/PRST/2011/22), by which the Council welcomed the Bonn conference and its conclusions as well as the strategic consensus between Afghanistan and the international community on a renewed and sustained partnership for the decade of transformation, which would entail firm mutual commitments. The President of the Council noted that the process of transition entailed the assumption of leadership responsibility by the Government of Afghanistan, while underlining the crucial role of the United Nations.

During the debate that followed, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations highlighted the clear message of support from the international community and the Government of Afghanistan in Bonn and Istanbul for a crucial role of the United Nations in Afghanistan and declared that the United Nations was committed to supporting the Government and people of Afghanistan for the long term. He noted the large-scale attacks of past weeks and the still-volatile security situation, which was affecting the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan said that it had been a year of significant milestones, but achievements had come at a price. He underlined that terrorism remained a strong threat.

The former Special Representative of the Secretary-General and former Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Staffan de Mistura, delivered his final briefing to the Council and stressed the Mission's contribution to the Afghan-led recovery and democratic process.

Members of the Council and other delegations participating in the meeting welcomed the coordinating role of UNAMA in providing international civilian assistance to Afghanistan. They expressed serious concern about the security situation and the increase in conflict-related casualties, the large majority of which were caused by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other violent and extremist groups and illegal armed groups. Members of the Council recognized the challenges Afghanistan faced, including in terms of the insurgency and the illegal drug economy, and stressed that the focus should be on security, political and economic development and regional relations. Against that backdrop, many speakers underlined the need for continued efforts, in particular by the International Security Assistance Force, to build the capacity of the Afghan security forces, and for progress on national reconciliation. Boosting the country's economic base and improving dialogue with neighbouring countries were also considered among crucial components of a successful transition.

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

On 19 December, in closed consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, Miroslav Jenča, briefed the Council on the Centre's mandated activities in the context of regional developments.

Members of the Council expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre as one of the most successful United Nations tools of preventive diplomacy, which assisted Central Asian countries in responding to challenges to peace and sustainable development of the region, including transboundary threats, and the

management of common resources, as well as with regard to the situation in Afghanistan and the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The Council agreed on a statement to the press in support of the Centre, encouraging further cooperation and coordination between the Governments of the region, the Centre, and relevant regional organizations.

Europe

Cyprus

On 9 December, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), Lisa Buttenheim, who noted that the situation in the buffer zone remained calm and stable. She stressed that active engagement by both sides with UNFICYP on military confidence-building measures could improve the security situation even further. She welcomed the progress in the peace talks achieved at the tripartite meeting of 30 and 31 October between the Cypriot leaders and the Secretary-General. However, she indicated that there was still much work to be done.

Members of the Council expressed their relevant positions on the Cyprus issue. They welcomed the important role of UNFICYP on the ground, and supported the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend its mandate.

On 14 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2026 (2011) extending the United Nations peacekeeping presence in Cyprus until 19 July 2012 and calling on the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities to work on reaching convergences on the remaining core issues towards a comprehensive and durable settlement.

Thematic and general issues

International Tribunals

On 7 December, the Council heard briefings by the President of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Theodor Meron, and the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Khalida Rachid Khan. They highlighted the contributions of those courts to international criminal law, but cautioned that limited resources, lack of State cooperation in critical areas and ongoing staffing challenges threatened the successful completion of their work. The Council also heard briefings by the Prosecutors of the two courts, the Prosecutor of the Tribunal for Rwanda, Hassan Bubacar Jallow, asserting that tracking and arresting the remaining nine fugitives indicted by the court posed a major challenge for the timely completion of its cases. The Prosecutor of the Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Serge Brammertz, said that, if the court had no more fugitives, it was because the international community understood that justice was sometimes a long-term project. Among representatives of concerned States taking the floor were those of Rwanda, Croatia and Serbia. Both Presidents outlined practical measures under consideration to help to facilitate the Tribunals' efforts.

Members of the Council welcomed the efforts by the Tribunals in fulfilling their mandates, noted with appreciation the level of cooperation of States with the Tribunals, and expressed their readiness to provide necessary assistance for the work of the two Tribunals.

On 21 December, by unanimously adopting resolution 2029 (2011), the members of the Council, while reaffirming that staff retention was essential for the completion of the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, extended the terms of office of four permanent judges and seven ad litem judges, all members of the Trial Chamber, until 30 June 2012 or sooner if their trials were completed.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 8 December, the members of the Council agreed on a statement to the press condemning terrorist attacks on 6 December in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif causing numerous deaths and injuries among Afghan civilians, and expressed their deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the victims of those heinous acts, and to their families, and to the people and Government of Afghanistan, and called on the Government to bring those responsible to justice.

On 9 December, the members of the Council agreed on a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attack against a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) convoy near Tyre, Lebanon, which injured five United Nations peacekeepers of the French battalion and two civilians, and expressing their sympathy to the injured and their families. They noted the commitment of Lebanon to launch an investigation, to bring to justice the perpetrators of that attack and to protect UNIFIL movements. The members of the Council called on all parties to abide scrupulously by their obligation to respect the safety of UNIFIL and other United Nations personnel.

On 23 December, the members of the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks that occurred in Damascus, causing scores of deaths and injuries, and expressing their deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the victims of those heinous acts and to their families, and to the people of the Syrian Arab Republic.

On 27 December, the members of the Council in a statement to the press condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks that had occurred in Madalla, Jos and Damaturu, Nigeria, on 25 December, causing numerous deaths and injuries, and expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the victims of those heinous crimes and their families, and to the people and Government of Nigeria.

Elections to the International Court of Justice

On 13 December, the Council elected Julia Sebutinde of Uganda to fill the final vacancy on the International Court of Justice. Ms. Sebutinde obtained nine votes of the Council, while her rival candidate Abdul G. Koroma of Sierra Leone received six votes.

Briefing by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Council

On 14 December, the Council heard briefings from five outgoing chairs of its subsidiary bodies — the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, U. Joy Ogwu, on the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and the Committee established

pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), concerning Iraq; the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, Nawaf Salam, on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) concerning Liberia; the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, on the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1533 (2004) and 1572 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire, respectively; the Deputy Permanent Representative of Gabon, Alfred Moussotsi, on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1636 (2005), concerning Lebanon; and the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ivan Barbalić, on the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions — who had chaired these organs during their two-year tenure on the Security Council.

Briefing by the Department of Political Affairs

On 16 December, within the monthly "horizon-scanning" briefing at closed consultations by the Department of Political Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council on the status of the inter-agency assessment mission jointly dispatched by the United Nations and the African Union to the Sahel region to assess the impact of the Libyan crisis on four countries in that region.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 20 December, the Council in closed consultations discussed under "Other matters" the issue of difficulties faced by some diplomatic missions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the context of paragraph 21 of resolution 1874 (2009).

Non-proliferation/Islamic Republic of Iran

On 21 December, the Council at a public meeting heard a briefing by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Néstor Osorio, on the work of the Committee from 1 September to 18 December 2011.

Members of the Council commended the efforts of the Committee in carrying out its mandate and underlined their commitment to seeking a comprehensive and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations. They also exchanged views on the final report of the Panel of Experts.